

LEGACY

Dalip S. Saund

Congressman Dalip Singh Saund was the first Asian Indian American to be elected as a county judge in California and to the United States Congress. Dalip Singh Saund was born on September 20, 1899 in village Chhajalwadi, Punjab, India. He went to a boarding school in Amritsar and Prince of Wales College in Jammu. Saund graduated with a B.A degree in Mathematics from Punjab University in 1919. He enrolled in UC Berkeley in 1920 to study food preservation, in the Department of Agriculture. Later, he switched to Mathematics and received MA in 1922 and Ph.D. in 1924. He decided to move to Southern California in the summer of 1925, in search of a farming job. In 1928, Saund married Marian Kosa, born of immigrant Czech parents. They had three children, a son and two daughters. The Luce-Cellar bill, allowing Asian immigrants the opportunity to be United States citizens, was signed by President Truman on July 3, 1946. Dalip Singh became a naturalized citizen on December 16, 1949. In 1952, Saund won election as county judge for Imperial County. In November 1956, Dalip S. Saund became the first Asian Indian American elected to the United States Congress.

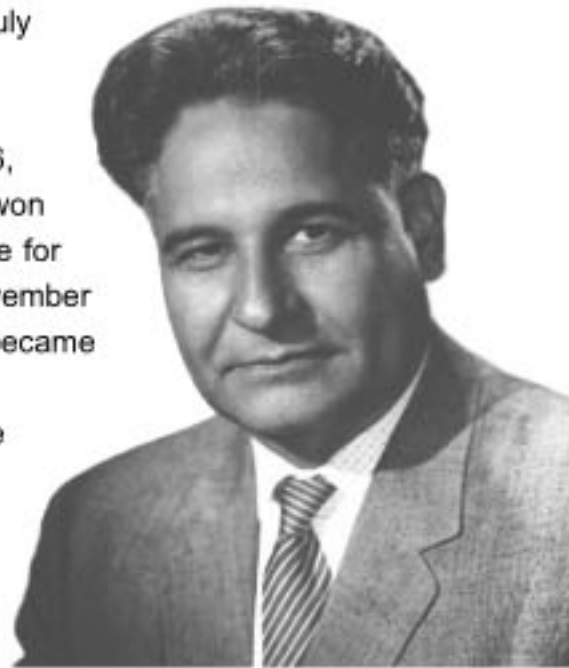


Photo courtesy of Inder Singh

PUNJABI AMERICAN FESTIVAL 1995



SUNDAY, MAY 28, 1995
YUBA SUTTER FAIR GROUNDS

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PUNJABI AMERICAN HERITAGE SOCIETY
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Today, California Punjabi continue to celebrate their heritage through festivals and ceremonies.

Cesar Estrada Chavez

Cesar was a civil rights, Latino, farm worker, and labor leader; a religious and spiritual figure; a community servant and social entrepreneur; a crusader for nonviolent social change; and an environmentalist and consumer advocate. A second-generation American, Cesar was born on March 31, 1927 on a small farm near Yuma, Arizona. Cesar grew up migrating across the Southwest, laboring in the fields and vineyards. To support his family, Cesar left school to work in the fields full time, after attaining only an eighth-grade education. Cesar joined the US Navy in 1945, and served in the Western Pacific during the end of World War II. After returning from the war, he married Helen Fabela, whom he had met working in the vineyards of central California. The Chavez family settled in the East San Jose barrio of Sal Si Puedes, and would eventually have eight children and thirty-one grandchildren. Cesar's life as a community organizer began in 1952 when he joined the Community Service Organization, a prominent Latino civil rights group. Cesar's dream, however, was to create an organization to protect and serve farm workers. In 1962, Cesar resigned from the CSO to found the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United Farm Workers of America. In founding and leading the first successful farm workers' union in American history, Cesar and his movement helped hundreds of thousands of farm workers win fair wages, medical coverage, pension benefits, humane living conditions. He led successful strikes and boycotts, resulting in the first industry-wide labor contracts in the history of American agriculture. A strong believer in the principles of nonviolence practiced by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Cesar effectively employed such peaceful tactics as fasts, boycotts, strikes, and pilgrimages.

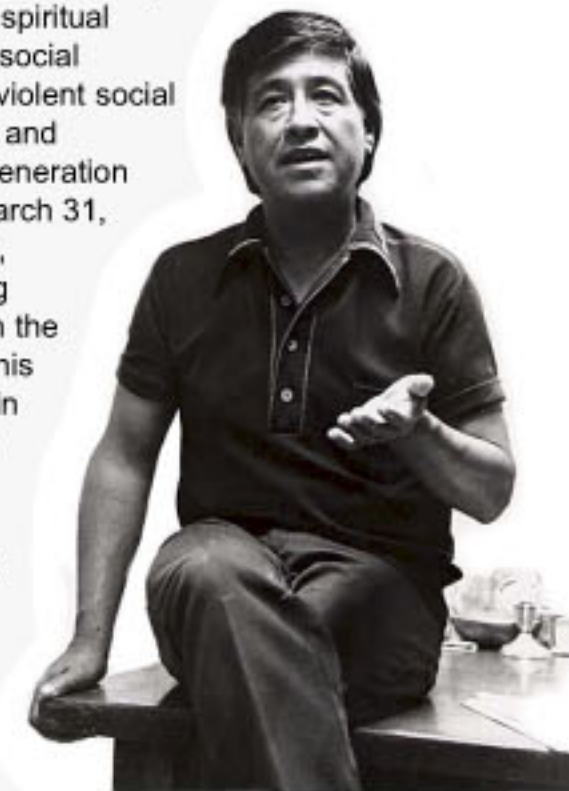


Photo courtesy of The Cesar E. Chavez Foundation

The Luce-Cellar Act of 1946 extended the opportunity for United States citizenship to Asian Indians. In 1965, a new immigration law revised discriminatory quotas against Asians and resulted in a dramatic increase of immigrants from India. Spurred by the independence of India from British rule and influenced by the growing numbers of newly arriving Punjabis, the established Punjabis in California experienced a need to re-establish their ethnic identities. Marriages steadily declined between Punjabi and Mexican American people.



Photo courtesy of The Cesar E. Chavez Foundation

The Mexican Americans in California continued to struggle to give all farm workers fair wages and working conditions.